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Westly Announces Plea in Charter School Case

Controller's Office Audit Spurs Investigation and Prosecution

SACRAMENTO – State Controller Steve Westly announced today that a former Sierra City school superintendent and charter school executive pled no contest to criminal charges of conflict of interest and misappropriation of public funds.

Jeff Bauer, former superintendent of the Sierra-Plumas Joint Unified School District and CEO of Sierra Summit Academy, will be sentenced in January 2005 in Sierra County Superior Court.

“The money we set aside for our schools constitutes a sacred public trust, and anyone who violates that trust must be held accountable,” Westly said. “I’m pleased my auditors and investigators uncovered these misdeeds and brought them to an end.”

Bauer was indicted after the Controller’s Division of Audits uncovered possible misuse of state funds at the academy. The Controller’s Special Investigations Bureau investigated the case, which was prosecuted by the Attorney General’s Office.

“We’re pleased to assist in the investigation and prosecution of this case,” Attorney General Bill Lockyer said. “We will continue to aggressively prosecute those who violate the public’s trust by stealing scarce dollars devoted to educating our children.”

The district has since revoked the academy’s charter.

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